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White Hand

A Tale of the Early Settlers of Louisiana.

BY AUSTIN C. BURDICK

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

"Simon Lobois," she said, in a freezing tone, "spare me from your professions of love, for they only add to my misery. Now answer me a solemn question: Where is my brother?"

"Your brother?" Simon uttered, starting in spite of himself. "What should I know of him?"

"But do you not know of him?" she asked, looking him steadily in the eye.

"I do not." But he trembled while he spoke; he could not help it.

"But you know he was seized by the Indians on the same night that I was."

"How should I know?"

"Simon, it is strange that you have never once asked me concerning the event of my abduction!"

"I—I—a—have had enough to think of without that. My love for you has engrossed my every thought, and claimed my whole attention."

"Then you know nothing of him?"

"I—I—why, how on earth should I?"

"Never mind. If you do not, then that is enough. Now, appoint the time for the wedding when you will."

"It shall be this very day."

"As you will. If it must be so, I care not for time. Henceforth all times are alike to me."

"Ay, sweet Louise, all of joy."

"Yes—such joy as the lost child feels in the deep wood; such joy as the poor orphan feels when she stands by the cold corpse of her dead parents!"

"Nonsense! But come; you shall find better quarters than these."

So Simon Lobois led his promised bride forth from the prison house back to the dwelling from whence she had been taken on the previous night, and then he went out to hunt up some more fitting garb for her to wear. He went to the Governor, and there he succeeded in purchasing a suitable habit. It was a dress made after the fashion of the times, of pale blue silk with scarlet facings, and worked with silver lace and thread. It belonged originally to one of Perier's daughters, but she had never yet worn it, it having been made for her wedding dress, and her lover dying on the eve of marriage.

The dress fitted Louise to a fault, and when thus prepared, she suffered herself to be led to the church, for Simon had determined that there should be no subsequent question about the legality of his marriage. When they entered the rude church they found quite a number of people collected, and the aged priest was there in his robes.

The poor girl's head ached, and when she stood before the priest she trembled violently, and even Simon was startled when he saw how pale she looked.

"Go on," she whispered. "O, go on, and let me out from here, or I shall die!"

The priest commenced the ceremony, and Simon answered the questions distinctly. Then the holy man turned to the bride, and he asked her the usual questions. She looked up, and in a faint, forced voice, she replied:

"To the best of my abilities I will do all this."

What more could human law require? Even Simon was surprised, for he had feared she would hesitate. But he knew not how sick and faint she was, and that she might have answered thus promptly in order to hasten the ceremony, for she wanted fresh air. The ceremony was finished, and the nuptial tie had been formed, and the marriage was registered in the great parchment book of the clerk. The fee was paid, and then the bridegroom turned away.

"In heaven's name, my wife," cried Simon, as they reached the open air, "what is the matter? What is it that thus affects you?"

"O, I am sick—sick as death!" was the faint reply. "Hasten—hasten to our home, or I shall fail and sink by the wayside!"

Simon saw that his companion spoke the truth, and with quick steps he hurried on, sometimes bearing his bride in his arms, and anon helping her to walk. At length they reached their dwelling, and Loppa was at once sent for the physician. The old man came, and at a glance he saw that his patient had a relapse of her fever, and this time he shook his head as he remarked:

"We can't drive it off this time, Monsieur Lobois. It is firmly seated, and must have its run. But the lady has a sound constitution, so you need apprehend no danger. But she has not followed my directions, I am sure, or she would not thus have sunk. Has she had the nutritious food I ordered?"

Simon stammered out a reply to the effect that the negro woman might have neglected it.

The physician dealt out his medicine, and having given directions for the care of his patient, he retired. Simon procured for his wife another attendant, so as to have two of them, and then he informed Louise that his business called him up the river.

"To the chateau?" asked she, faintly.

"Yes. I was in hopes that you would have accompanied me, but that is now impossible. However, I must go, though I shall return as soon as possible."

"And what will you tell my father?"

"Simply that you are my wife. Of course I shall explain how I rescued you from the savages, and how, in return, I claimed your hand. But I have prepared the best of care for you during my absence, and you shall not want for anything. The physician will be regular in his visits, and I hope to find you well when I return."

The invalid betrayed no sorrow at the departure of her husband, nor did she exhibit any extended signs of deep affection at his adieu. She closed her eyes as he spoke the parting words, nor did she open them again until old Loppa came and whispered in her ear that her husband was gone.

CHAPTER XV.

Up and down the wide walk in the garden paced Brion St. Julien and Goupart St. Denis. The old man was pale and wan, and his steps were short and tremulous. The silvery streaks seemed to have multiplied themselves upon his head, and surely many a deep line of care was added to his brow. St. Denis looked not so pale, but a sorrowful look was upon his face, and in his dark, rich brown eye dwelt a melancholy light, such as could only come from a bruised and bleeding heart. His hands were folded upon his bosom; his eyes bent upon the ground, while within his own stout arm was locked that of his companion.

"We can search no more," said the marquis, in a broken voice. "They must either have been slain, or else borne away off to the far homes of the Chickasaws."

"And do you think old Tony's report can be relied upon?" asked Goupart.

"Yes. He says he is sure, and if he feels so, then it is so."

"Then our only hope is in enlisting the whole French force in our behalf, for these Chickasaws are a powerful, warlike people, and not easily overcome."

"Ah, we cannot do that," returned the marquis, sadly. "The Governor, Perier, is not a warm friend of mine. He had set his eyes upon this place before I bought it, and he meant to have gained it free of cost. He dares not show open hostility to me, but he would not help me."

"Then," said Goupart, "I will myself go in search, even though I disguise myself in the outer semblance of the red man."

But the marquis shook his head dubiously at this.

"No, no," he said. "You would only throw away your own life, and then I should be left all alone. I could not live, Goupart, if you, too, were gone. Alas! what of life is left to either of us now! I had just seen the opening of life's promise—the budding of my soul's great hope—when this drear midnight came!"

For a while after this they walked on in silence. All search had been made that could be planned with reason, but in vain. Old Tony, who was quick of wit, and who had not forgotten the wild life of his youth, had followed the trail of the marauders a distance of forty miles, and there he lost it upon a branch of the Tickfah. This trail led in a southeasterly direction, so the bereaved ones had not a shadow of doubt that Louis and Louise had been taken to the distant homes of the Chickasaws.

The day was drawing near to its close when one of the female domestics rushed into the sitting room and announced that Simon Lobois was coming. Both the marquis and St. Denis started to their feet, and gazed upon each other earnestly.

"O," uttered the old man, "I wish I knew that Simon was innocent of all crime in this." The words were spoken with strong, sudden emotion, and showed that the speaker had been racked with dark doubts.

"I would not say that he is guilty of all this," returned Goupart; "but things rest most darkly against him. However, we can easily tell. His face is very apt to reveal the emotions of the inner man, and I feel assured he will betray himself."

The marquis took a turn up and down the room to compose himself, and by the time he had done this, Simon's footstep sounded in the hall, and in a moment more he entered. He moved quickly up to St. Julien and caught him by the hand.

"Ah, my good, kind father," he uttered, "I have been detained longer than I expected. But I am happy to find you well."

Then the black-hearted man turned to Goupart, and with a stiff, formal bow, he said:

"Monsieur St. Denis, I hope you are well."

But the noble youth spoke not in reply. He could not. He detected in Simon's eye a look of triumph that was not to be mistaken, and from that moment his suspicions were all alive again.

"But I do not see Louis. Where is he?" asked Lobois, after he had taken a seat.

The marquis gazed fixedly into the speaker's eye, but he could detect nothing there out of the way.

"Louis is—is—gone!" the old man uttered.

"How? Have you not found him yet?"

"Then you knew he was gone?" said the marquis, with a quick glance of fear.

"Yes—I knew that both your children were gone from here."

"How?" the old man asked.

"Louise herself has told me the story," was the calm response.

Both the old man and the young started to their feet.

"Louise! Louise told you?" gasped Goupart.

"Yes, monsieur," returned Simon, gazing upon the youth with a look of malignant triumph. "I had the good fortune to rescue the loved damsel from the hands of the Indians."

At this juncture the marquis sank back to his seat, and Goupart followed his example.

"And where is she now?" the stricken parent asked, in a whisper.

"She is at New Orleans. I should have brought her with me, but the state of her health would not permit. She has a fever; but you need not fear, for I have left the best of care for her."

"But how—where—did you find her?"

"It was most strange," answered Simon, assuming a devout look. "While in New Orleans, I heard that a small party of Chickasaws were on their way towards Lake Pontchartrain with a white girl a prisoner. I knew, of course, that the red villains had been lurking about here; and, moreover, I knew of no other point from whence they could have brought such a prisoner, short of the fort at Natchez. The fear became so firmly fixed that I resolved to set out; so I engaged the services of one who knew the region round about the lake, and having hired some men who belonged to a ship then lying in the river, I obtained two small boats and set out. We crossed the lake, and landed as near as we could to the opening of the trail that I had been informed the Indians were upon. We mounted the bank, and almost the first thing that met my eye was the form of an Indian pacing up and down by the side of an open space in the woods. I knocked the sentinel down, and in a moment the whole party were upon their feet. At a little distance I saw the form of a female asleep upon the ground. I demanded that the prisoner should be given up to me, but I had to use some heavy threats before they would yield. At length, however, upon my promise that I would not cause them to be molested further, they gave the prisoner up, and you can imagine my deep joy when I knew that I had saved Louise St. Julien."

For some moments there was silence in the room. Goupart, who was very pale, but whose lips were firmly compressed, was the first to break it.

"How long ago was it that you found the lady?" he asked.

"About two weeks," was the reply.

"And has she been sick ever since?"

"No. I had meant to bring her with me, but she was taken down with a fever on the very day before I started."

"St. Julien," cried the youth, turning to the old man, "I will away at once and seek her, and as soon as she is able she shall be with you. Tony shall go with me."

A satanic smile dwelt upon Simon's features as Goupart ceased speaking, and in a tone of the same nature he said:

"You need not trouble yourself, Monsieur St. Denis. I assure you I should not have left Louise, had I not seen her in the care of those who will be faithful. She has her own servants to attend her."

"Her own servants!" uttered Goupart, changing color.

"Yes, monsieur."

"But Goupart had better go down, Simon, and come home with her," suggested the old man.

"Excuse me," answered Lobois, "if I object to that. Monsieur St. Denis is not just the man that I should select as an escort for my wife!"

Goupart St. Denis started half up from his seat, and then sank back like a man who has received a shot through the heart. His face was deadly pale, and his hands were clutched upon his knees.

"Your wi—i—ife!" gasped the old man, starting up and taking a step towards his nephew.

"Yes, my dear father," Lobois replied. "I am the happy man. The sweet child has accepted me as her husband. And why should she not? She owed her very life to me, and in gratitude she rewarded me with her hand."

"But not yet, Simon! You are not married?"

"Most assuredly we are."

"No, no; that is impossible! Louise would never have done——"

"Hold, sir! We will have no argument about it. Here is the document that will satisfy you."

Thus speaking, Simon took a paper from his pocket, which he opened and handed to the marquis. It was a legal certificate—an attested copy of the record—bearing the seal and signature of the colonial clerk, and vouching for the legal marriage of Simon Lobois and Louise St. Julien. The old man read it, and then, with a deep groan, the paper fell from his hand. Quick as thought, Goupart picked it up. The hope had flashed upon his mind that the document might be a forgery; but as his eye rested upon it, the hope passed away, for he knew it was a legal transcript of the record. The paper dropped from his hand, too, and he sank back into his chair. The thing had come with a thunder-crash upon him, and for the moment he was unable to speak. But one look into the face of Lobois started his heart to life again.

(To be continued.)

A Question of Bills.

A traveller in England rested at noon at a wayside inn and took luncheon. The landlord was a social person and after presenting his bill sat down and chatted with his guest.

"By the way," the latter said, after a while, "what is your name?"

"My name," replied the landlord, "is Partridge."

"Ah," returned the traveller, with a humorous twinkle in his eyes, "by the length of your bill I should have thought it was Woodcock!"

This story, as it appears in a recent book by a distinguished English diplomat, is credited with having amused Bismarck.

The Joke on the Joker.

A Long Island justice has decided that to send a worthless package by express to a person, requiring the recipient to pay charges, comes under the head of petty larceny and is punishable as such. In the case the justice decided one man had sent by express a worthless package to another as a joke. The express charge was 35 cents. The man who got the package couldn't see anything funny in the business and complained to the magistrate, who entered a charge of petty larceny and extortion and fined the joker $5 and costs.

Says Mr. Medlergrass.

"As to this here plan to kill moskeeters with coal oil," said Mr. Medlergrass, while the grocer was filling his can, "I don't know that it is fatal to them insects, but if they are anything like about a dozen hired girls that has started the breakfast fire in this town and subsequently gone out through the roof, it will be hard times for them Jersey biters when the coal oil campaign sets in in dead earnest."—Baltimore American.

Reformed.

"Willie, didn't I see you matching pennies with Willie Blimmer?"

"Y-yes, mamma!"

"Well, don't you know it's very wicked?"

"'Deed I do, mamma!"

"Then don't you do so, again."

"I w-won't, mamma—I'm busted!"—San Francisco Bulletin.

The Magnet.

"Look here, Dunwell, how do you manage to bring out all your apartment house debtors? When I ring the bell no one shows up."

"It's dead easy! I go down disguised as a health-food sample distributer. In two minutes every occupant of the house is in the hall."—Chicago News.

Not Sister.

Mrs. Passay (who imagines she is youthful)—I understand Mr. Brown, whom we met yesterday, said he would never take me and my May for mother and daughter.

Mrs. Pepprey—Yes, I believe he said you looked like mother and grandmother.—Philadelphia Press.

Hope is a lure. There is no hand that can retain a wave or a shadow.—Victor Hugo.

White blackberries and green roses have been propagated in Louisiana.

In the Other Window.

"Ten days is a long time to be sick. You can keep pretty patient the first six of 'em, but the last six"—Roberta stopped and reckoned. Were there two sixes in ten? She shook her head. It is not always easy to reckon when you are sick.

"The last fi—er—four of 'em you have a perfect right to be cross," she went on. So she was cross.

"I'm just the mis'ablest little girl there is!" she scolded, aloud. "There can't be anybody in the world as sick an'—an' unfortunit as I am, so there! Did I want to be sick at this house? Didn't I want to be sick at home, where there's room enough—mercy! did I want to be sick anywhere? Did I do anything to be sick? No, I didn't."

She almost laughed at herself then—not quite. But perhaps it was that which made her look up just that minute and see the Strange Little Girl at the other window. They had put up the curtain at last. For days Roberta had been wondering what was behind that curtain, but she had not once thought it might be a little girl—and a sick one, too!"

The two windows were quite near together, just across a tiny, narrow back yard. She could see the Strange Little Girl very plainly, indeed.

"She's thinner an' whiter than I am, an' she's got more pillows behind her," thought Roberta. "I wonder if that's as straight as she can sit up?"

Suddenly the Strange Little Girl nodded a shy little nod. Of course Roberta nodded back. If they could only have opened the windows, they would have been acquainted in a few minutes. But of course sick folks—

"I know what!" Roberta exclaimed, interrupting her own thoughts. "If that little girl knows how, we can talk deaf-an'-dumb. I'm going to try and see!"

She hitched up a little nearer the window and held up her fingers in plain view. Then she made them spell out words slowly.

"How do you do?" they spelled.

The Strange Little Girl knew how. Her fingers began to spell:

"How do you do?"

After that, as Roberta said, they regularly talked.

"I've got the measles. What have you got?" Roberta said.

"Hip disease."

The Strange Little Girl said very short things, as if her weak little fingers got tired very soon.

"I don't know what that is, but the measles are awful." I am afraid Roberta's fingers said "orful." "Ever had them?"

"No, I never."

"Then you ought to be thankful. I don't have my curtain up for days, sometimes."

"Weeks I don't."

Roberta gasped a little.

"One day I ached."

"I always do."

Mercy! Roberta thought hard.

"I've had the mis'ablest time."

"Why, I haven't!"

"I didn't have a thing to do."

"Why didn't you sing? I do."

It was a long sentence for the weak little fingers, and they sank wearily into the Strange Little Girl's lap. But the Strange Little Girl was smiling.

Roberta tried again. This would surprise her.

"I've been sick ten days."

"Ten years," spelled the tired little thin, white fingers. And then some one came and drew down the curtain at the other window. There was just time to nod and spell "Good-by!"

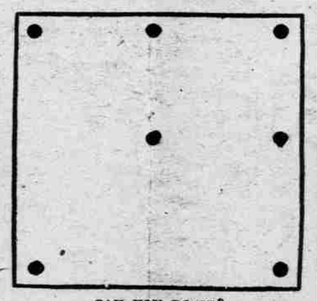
Ten years! Ten years! Roberta sank back on her pillows and shut her eyes. She was trying to think how it would feel to be sick ten years—to ache always—and sing.

"Oh, I can't! I can't make b'lieve it!" she cried, softly. "An' I thought I was the unfortunitest one in the world. Oh, that poor, that brave little girl in the other window!"

Then there were new, soft, sweet sounds in Roberta's window. Roberta was singing.—Youth's Companion.

A Good Puzzle.

Draw three straight lines across this square, in such a way that there will be seven separate sections, each section containing one dot and no more. The lines may cross each other, but each one must be drawn at one stroke.



CAN YOU DO IT?

Bobbie's Original Definition.

Teacher—What is a cannibal? Can anyone tell what a cannibal is?

Bobbie—Please, ma'am, a cannibal is one who eats each other.—Kansas City Journal.

WATERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

They Are Inconstant, Shifting and Not to Be Depended Upon.

There is little reason, however, for a settlement in these parts to bestir itself. Its future is too uncertain, says the New York Mail and Express. The town that is on the river this year may be on a useless swamp the next; the town that is five miles inland, with no dream of the Mississippi, may be awakened any morning by the roar of a steamboat whistle. There are many points in desperate straits to-day. Tiptonville, Tenn., a town of more than ordinary prosperity, depending altogether on the steamboat service, once on the main channel, now finds herself, because of a cut-off, on a shallow backwater, which goes dry as her streets in low season.

Which brings me again to the river's vagaries. To begin, its crookedness is something appalling. Approaching Cairo from the north by boat, the stranger, seeing the city's elevators and church spires within a stone's throw, is pretty certain to rush into the cabin to assemble his belongings when he has still before him a tortuous ride of two hours. Yet this phenomenon is not wholly without advantages. The citizen of before-mentioned Tiptonville, who misses the upbound boat at breakfast time, does not worry over the accident. He calmly spends the morning at home, then, after dinner, trudges four or five miles across country to Slough landing, arriving there in plenty of time—likely within an hour or two to spare—to catch his boat, which, in the interval since leaving Tiptonville, has been wandering through some thirty miles of bends. Down in the Great Bends country, below Memphis, the southgoing steamer at the end of a half day's travel may be farther from the Gulf of Mexico as the crow flies than she was at the beginning. One may go from Memphis to Orleans by rail—the distance is 400 miles—in a single night. By steamboat it is, at best, a four days' run; the Mississippi dilly-dallys through exactly 800 miles of twists and turns between the two cities.

5,000 HYMNS WRITTEN BY BLIND WOMAN.

Though she has been blind since she was six weeks old, Miss Frances Jane Crosby, as she is generally called, though her real name is Mrs. Alexander Van Allstyne, has written more than 5,000 hymns, many of them known all over the world. And though she is now 83 years old, rather feeble, and totally blind, she still travels to evangelist meetings in various cities and gives readings and lectures. Her home is in Bridgeport, Conn.

FRANCES CROSBY.

Among the most famous Gospel hymns written by Miss Crosby are those beginning: "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," "All the Way My Savior Leads Me," and "I Am Thine, O Lord; I Have Heard Thy voice."

Save for the heavy green glasses she is compelled to wear, there is little in Miss Crosby's manner while lecturing to indicate her sightlessness. She reads her notes, printed in raised letters, with almost imperceptible movements of her fingers, and turns her head as though glancing about the audience.

"Hymn writing is my life work," says Miss Crosby, "and I cannot tell you what pleasure I derive from it. I believe I would not live a year if my work were taken from me. A great many people sympathize with me, but, although I am grateful to them, I really don't need their sympathy. What would I do with it?"

Low-Studded Pacific Islands.

We frequently hear of those lovely little groups of islands in the southern seas. They are described as earthly paradises. Some of them sit unoccupied, and might well be coveted by one-idea people who would like to see some hobby enthroned.

But on reflection, a prudent American would prefer to live a little farther above water. The Society group, which came near being washed overboard recently, were barely twenty feet above the water, so that those of the inhabitants that were saved managed to keep alive by climbing to the tops of trees, and where the trees did not prove tall enough the perchers were swept into the sea. In the great gale some eighty of the Society Islands were thus devastated, and in all over 1,000 inhabitants found watery graves. The United States has some island possessions in the southern seas, and it is sometimes suggested that we might plant our civilization and our flag there. There is no question that many of these island gems are paradises, but it would be better to roost higher. The land is too low, even to plant the flag, says the Boston Globe. Life is too precious to wake up some morning and find one's self missing, and tidal waves and volcanoes have become very impudent of late.

The Desert of Gobi.

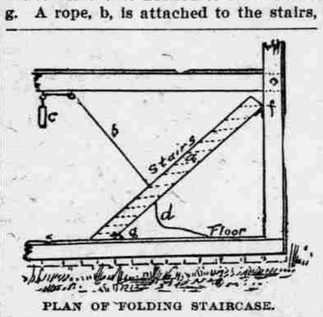
The great desert of Gobi would fill the entire Mississippi valley from the Alleghenies to the Rockies. Upward of 300,000 square miles of Arabia are an uninhabited waste, while the terrible Sahara is vast enough to cover the whole United States.

World's Supply of Gold.

It is anticipated that the world's supply of gold will be doubled in the next ten years.

Folding Skeleton Stairs.

It is often desirable to have the stairs in the wagon house or barn so arranged that they may be removed quickly. As this is not often practicable, the next best plan is to have them so constructed as to fold up out of the way. A good method of doing it is shown by the sketch, in which a shows one side of the stairs, the dotted lines representing the various steps. The steps should not be less than three feet in length and eight inches wide. The upper end of the lower portion of each side is hinged to the side of the building at f, while the lower end is hooked to the floor at g. A rope, b, is attached to the stairs,

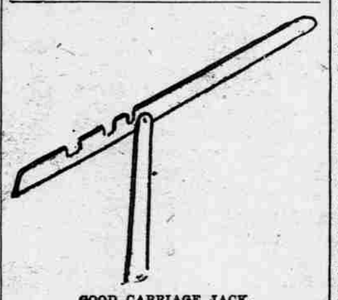


PLAN OF FOLDING STAIRCASE.

passes over two pulleys, and is there fastened to a weight, c, which is just heavy enough to raise the free end of the stairs up to the ceiling. When the lower end of the steps is released the whole folds up closely against its upper floor and is entirely out of the way. Two or three feet of the rope are allowed to dangle as seen at d, by which the whole appartus is again pulled down into position. The weight, c, should slide up and down close to the side of the building, so as to be entirely out of the way.—D. E. Smith, in Farm and Home.

Home-Made Carriage Jack.

While the heavy jacks used on wagons answer very well for the carriage as well, a lighter jack, such as is shown in the illustration, is easier to handle. It will take but a little time to make a jack of this kind by any one who is at all handy with tools. The standard is made of inch-and-a-quarter stuff, three inches wide and tapered to two inches;



GOOD CARRIAGE JACK.

it is thirty inches long. The lifter is also one and a quarter inches thick, five feet and six inches long and four inches wide. Twenty inches from the bottom cut a notch and seven inches above another notch; six inches farther up bore a hole for a three-eighths-inch bolt and bolt the piece on to the standard, so it will swing freely. To use the appliance, place the notched bar under the axle of the carriage, lifting the wheel clear from the ground, and the standard will swing into place and hold securely. Easily made and light, such a jack should be owned by every man who has a carriage to oil.

The Forcing of Pole Beans.

The forcing of dwarf or bush beans under glass has been a favorite practice at certain seasons of the year with most gardeners, but the use of the pole or running varieties is just beginning to receive attention. The pole bean, like cucumbers, tomatoes trained to one stem, sweet corn, etc., must have plenty of head room or space above the bench or bed in which to develop, and doubtless this accounts for its not having been considered heretofore. The modern lettuce and cucumber houses with the beds directly on the ground are well adapted for this crop. The soil should be well enriched, containing an abundance of available plant food, preferably a sandy loam composted by mixing equal parts of rich dark loam, sand and manure. The beds may be made directly upon the ground, with the prepared soil averaging about seven inches in depth.—Denver Field and Farm.

For the Farmer.

Six million two hundred thousand farmers' bulletins on 140 different subjects were printed for the Department of Agriculture during the past fiscal year. As there are about six million farmers, exclusive of agricultural laborers, in the United States, this is one pamphlet for each one. If any farmer did not get his copy, it was because he did not apply for it, for they are nearly all turned over to the members of Congress for free distribution.

There is hardly a subject in which farmers are interested that is not discussed in some one of the various bulletins. Information is contained in them about the feeding of farm animals, hog cholera, how to kill weeds, the care and feeding of chickens, butter-making and the care of milk, the vegetable garden, good roads, breeds of dairy cattle, bread-making, how to raise apples, rice culture, tomato growing, sugar as food, insects affecting tobacco, cotton and grapes; diseases of potatoes and apples, how to detect oleomargarine and renovated butter, tree-planting on rural school grounds, the Angora goat, and scores of other things.

It would be difficult to estimate with any degree of accuracy the financial benefit which has accrued to the farmers from the perusal of these bulletins. Such men as believe they must be continually studying to keep abreast of the times and to understand the possibilities of their business have been the most diligent readers of the publications of the Department of Agriculture. It is the benefit which these men have derived that justifies the continued expenditure of money by the government for free education of this kind, an education almost as necessary to national prosperity as that provided for the children in the public schools.

Grain Foods, Good and Bad.

Among the hundreds of feeds ingeniously combined from the ground grains, or containing portions of these grains left as byproducts in the manufacture of malt and spirituous liquors, of starch, sugar and glucose, of breakfast foods or of vegetable oils, the feeder finds a wide range of puzzling compounds. Led only by his eye, touch or taste (helpful as these are to the purchaser who is guided by good understanding of principles) he would find it exceedingly difficult to make a sure selection of the feeds best suited to his needs. Oat hulls, corn cobs, coffee hulls, cottonseed hulls and other materials are very skillfully used as adulterants, so that in some feeds now for sale the percentage of fiber is so great that nearly all the energy represented in the food must be used to masticate the material and pass it through the animal's body. Of corn and oat feeds on the market at least ten brands examined by the New York station contained from ten to nearly sixteen per cent of fiber; while a mixture of equal parts of corn and oats should contain less than six per cent. Good oats normally contain less than ten per cent of fiber, while several oat feeds examined contained from twenty-two to twenty-nine per cent and sold for from $20 to $30 or more a ton. Prices of feeds of equal value also vary remarkably in markets lying side by side. One dealer in New York sells a certain brand for $30 a ton, another dealer in the same city asks $40. Good bulletins for those who feel the need of studying the subject are Nos. 217 of the station at Geneva, N. Y., and 85 of the station at Amherst, Mass. Some of the new feeds are desirable, and some are decided frauds. Fortunately the States are investigating so closely and testing so many samples that it is possible to size up the various products at pretty nearly their true feeding value.—American Cultivator.

Movable Fences for Sheep.

It would pay grain farmers to have a movable fence, or, as they are called in England, hurdles, to inclose a flock of sheep where they have taken off oats, rye or wheat and do not want to put in another crop at once to keep up the fertility of the soil, says American Cultivator. In England they are used not only for this, but they often break such fields and sow them to the English or flat turnip and then hurdle the sheep on them to eat the turnips after they are fairly well grown. This doubly enriches the field, which is one reason why the fields in England have a heavier turf than we often produce here, and why they carry more cattle and sheep to the acre than we average.

Management of Steep Slopes.

Some very good land is located on rather steep slopes, but goes as pasture because the owner fears to break it up and run the chance of serious injury by washing. Such fields, when cultivated, should be covered with something all the time. Rye sown early in fall will do much to hold the soil during the season of heavy rain. The land should be kept in sod much of the time to supply vegetable matter, which makes the soil like a sponge to take up and hold the water. Clover is a grand crop to follow a hoed crop and rye on these steep fields.

Farm Notes.

Sow part of the clover early and part late. That is, sow the same ground twice. This makes double work, but also oftentimes insures a double crop, and sometimes a crop against no crop.

Cold water will absorb about 36 per cent of its own weight of salt, and boiling about 40 per cent. This makes what is known as a saturated brine, which always means all the salt that the water will absorb. In salting butter the brine is seldom made stronger than 30 or 34 per cent of salt.

The cost of weeds to the farmers in a community is enormous compared with certain other expenses. Weeds rob the soil and entail labor from spring until fall. If the farmers in each community would unite and determinedly fight weeds for three years, not allowing a single one to grow if possible, they would find their expenses greatly reduced, owing to the cost of production of weeds and their destruction being removed.

Subsoiling is a matter which has its advocates, but many scientific agriculturists oppose it. It is claimed that, although the subsoil plows break the soil to a low depth, yet it destroys the channels which admit the flow of air and water below the surface. That is, as plant roots penetrate deeply and die they leave channels, which are numerous and which are increased every year. Breaking the soil, it is claimed, destroys them and lessens the supply of moisture.